Dwarf Indian Tribe In Venezuela Wilds

Explorer Tells of Strange People Who Live in Region of Eternal Fog and Get Drunk Once a Month

EXPLORATOINS into hitherto ununknown forests of Venezuela by Theodore De Booy of the American Geographical Society and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania have brought to the knowledge of ethnologists a race of dwarf Indians that live in an eternal fog, far more impenetrable than that of London, and whose members get drunk regularly once a month. Mr. De Booy also has located a treasure cave that will be of equal interest to the archæologist and to the seeker of gold, deep in a wilderness that not even the Indians will penetrate.

In full sight of the mountain at the base of which the cave is located the explorer was forced to turn back because his Indian guides and carriers refused to continue the journey. One of their reasons was a lack of food, but the principal objection apparently was a superstitious fear of the spirits of warriors buried in the cave after a great battle told about in their traditions. The mountain is near the border of Venezuela and Colombia.

Cave Holds Treasures.

"It is quite probable, almost certain, in fact," says Mr. De Booy in a recent issue of the museum *Journal*, "that this burial cave contains archæological treasures of the highest value. Our archæological researches proved without a doubt that the entire region had at one time been inhabited by the Arhuacos, a tribe of which a small remnant still lives in the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta. The Motilones, which includes the Macoas, were evidently comparative newcomers to the region and had either driven out the Arhuacos or had killed them off, probably only a short while before the Conquest. Researches by other archæologists have proven that a similar occurrence took place in the Goajira Peninsula directly to the northward, and that the Goajiras superseded the Arhuacos in this latter region.

"The burial cave, therefore, probably contains Arhuacan specimens, and as the Arhuacans were excellent workers in gold and had quantities of gold ornaments it will be seen that the chances of this cave containing gold ornaments as well as burial objects of other kinds are very good. Two days before coming within sight of the peak in which the cave was to be found, the Indians had shown me certain regions where evidence could still be seen of former clearings. These clearings were of considerable age and were only distinguished from the surrounding woods by the fact that the trees were not quite as large and the undergrowth of lesser density."

Mr. De Booy landed at Maracaibo and spent two days on horseback crossing the plain to La Horqueta, one of the last outposts of civilization in Venezuela. He had to pass part of this time over a narrow and gloomy trail through a wilderness abounding with tigers, jaguars, wildcats, monkeys and deer.—Beyond this forest is a great plain and back of that the mountains with their heads lost in the fog. "While the altitude of these mountains is not sufficiently high to make them snow covered," says the explorer, "the fog and mists at times would almost make one think that the summits were covered with snow."

In the days of the Conquistadores La Villa, a little town along the route to La Horqueta, was the starting point for raiding expeditions into the Indian territory to the south of the Rio Negro. The town is filled with ruined foundations of houses and a quaint old church still stands. It is said to be the oldest in that part of the country.

Nine hours travel through the jungle from La Horqueta De Rooy came to the settlement of Machiques, outside of which be found members of the Tucuens Indians, who come down to the mountains to work occasionally in exchange for hoop iron, cutlasses, beads, iron cooking pots and axes. "The Tucucus are a very shy race," the explorer observes, "and only came when they were in need of ironmongery.

"The researches of this expedition proved that the Tucucus, the Irapenos, the Pariris, the Macoas, the Rio Negro and the Rio Yasa Indians all belong to the great Motilone family. The various subtribes derive their names from the rivers to the south of Machiques, the headwaters of which they frequent. For many centuries the Montilones have proved to be a mystery and the information we have of them, in ancient and contemporary literature, is very scant and for the greater part untrustworthy.

"They are to-day regarded with great dread by the Venezuelans, who are unwilling to penetrate into their mountain retreats, a fact which is perhaps not to be wondered at when one considers the savage reputation that was given to the Indians by the early settlers. Perhaps the clearest proof of this fear can be found in the mention of the Motilones by A. Ernst, who states:

"'The Motilones are an almost unknown tribe, which, since the time of the Conquest, have remained in a completely savage state, living on the humid mountain slopes of the frontier between Venezuela and Colombia. There are no means to make them give up the life of savage thieves to which they are accustomed. No one has, up to the present time, seen the plantations of the Montilones, or known with certainty if they have any fixed abode. Lopez on his map of Venezuela, Madrid, 1787, adds to their names the notice "the worst Indians that exist," which even in our days is the current opinion of the inhabitants of the neighboring regions.'"

Tucucu runners were sent out to request for De Booy the privilege of visiting the Macoas. Most of the Tucucus thought he was crazy and predicted that he would never return, but finally the permission was obtained. Carrying only a camera, an aneroid barometer and a compass, and finding even that very much of a load, De Booy spent two days climbing up and down an almost invisible mountain trail, with eight Tucucus carrying his baggage. At the end of the first day of travel he ran into the fog country. "Practically every day the mists roll down the mountains at about midday," he says, "and one spends the balance of the day in an enveloping fog which makes one forget that the equator is but ten degrees distant." Weather was so cold that at night the explorer was forced to use two blankets. Describing the settlements of the Macoas, he says:

"No two huts are found in close proximity. In fact, these Indians appear to take pleasure in living as far removed from each other as possible, which may be due to the eternal fights they wage among themselves. Each hut is on a separate hilltop, so that while the entire village is within hailing distance, it often takes as much as half an hour to go from one abode to another, by first descending one slope and then ascending the other. Their clearings and plantations, on which they grow yucca, sweet potatoes, corn, bananas, plantains and yams, are also far removed from their huts, so that it frequently takes a man the half of a day almost to walk to his farm. Why this is so, when the hill slopes directly underneath the Indian's abode are just as well adapted to agricultural purposes, I cannot state, and inquiries failed to give a logical explanation."

Offered All the Booty.

In a long stay with this tribe, during which he studied their manners, customs and language, De Booy's chief difficulty was in avoiding the invitation of the chief to join in an expedition against the Rio Negro Indians. The Macoa chief offered to give him all the booty taken in the shape of bows and arrows. The Macoas really are a race of dwarfs, the average height of the men being five feet one inch, and that of the women four feet eight inches. The first thing they did for De Booy, who is more than six feet tall, was to build him a hut about four times as large as their own.

De Booy found the Indians so curious and so persistent that he had to ask the chief to build a stockade to "keep out the children." In this he did his photographic work. The natives had never before seen a white man of light complexion and De Booy was a constant source of wonder to them. In spite of their warlike tendencies he was never in danger except at the second "Chica feast," concerning which he says:

"Perhaps one of the most interesting customs of the Macoas is the Chica feast. They indulge in this feast almost every month when the moon is full, and it was my good fortune to attend one of these feasts and my bad fortune to attend a second one afterward. The first preparation of the feast is the blowing of conch shells. This is done with great perseverance and monotony for an entire afternoon. That same night the wife of the giver of the feast grinds the maize from which the chica is prepared.

"The following morning the crushed maize is tied up in small bundles, enveloped in leaves and cooked for about an hour. The maize pellets are then laid in the sun to dry, after the wrapping has been removed, and they develop a covering of fungi through partial fermentation. The day previous to the feast these pellets are placed in a hollowed out log, with crushed ripe bananas and crushed sweet potatoes. Water is poured on this mixture and fermentation commences immediately.

Drink Four Hours.

"The following day, amid frantic blowing of conch shells, the feast commences. At first, the merry making is mild. Some monotonous singing takes place, but the participants pay more attention to the imbibing of the liquor than to the dancing and the singing. After drinking for about four hours, the Indians generally become quarrelsome and want to fight among themselves. It is a point of etiquette among the Macoas to finish the entire brew of chica and by dawn one would see the few members of the tribe that were still able to walk making a weary attempt to empty the wooden troughs.

"The second chica feast which I witnessed proved to be a trifle more thrilling than the first. Two of the Indians had harbored a grudge against their wives and declared at the outset that they were going to kill them. As the Macoas had not yet imbibed enough chica to make them unreasonable, I interfered and argued with the men, telling them that there were but few women in the tribe and that there would be a serious shortage if they killed the two. My arguments finally prevailed.

"Shortly after this, two youths began a fight with their bows, used as a quarterstaff, and succeeded in giving each other several gashes. Some of the Indians, by now very much excited, brought up the subject of a fight at the previous feast when two brothers attempted to kill their brother, the chief. Some time before the fight I had been doctoring the chief, a feeble old man, for dyspepsia and had succeeded in improving his condition. The Macoas now claimed that it was due to this improvement that the chief had become belligerent and had started the fight with his two brothers, as previous to my coming he had always been content to allow his brothers to have their way. I had little difficulty in persuading them that I really had no part in the quarrel."

YOUNG MEN WITH BOWS and ARROWS

MACOA CHILD

Sumerian Tiles Tell Of Life in 2100 B. C.

Revival of Adam and Eve Translation Draws Attention to Other Interesting Facts About Cultured Race

WHEN Stephen Herbert Langdon, M. A., B. D., Ph. D., succeeded Dr. A. H. Sayce in the chair of Assyriology at Oxford his appointment was considered to be a recognition of American scholarship. Prof. Langdon was born at Monroe, Mich., on May 8, 1876, studied at the Monroe public school, was graduated as B. A. at Michigan University in 1898, and as M. A. a year later. Other titles came to him, such as B. D. from the Union Theological Seminary of New York city, 1903, and Ph. D. in 1904 from Columbia University. He assumed his duties at Oxford in 1908.

Four years were occupied by him while in charge of the Babylonian section of the University of Pennsylvania in translating the Sumerian tablets discovered in excavations near Nippur in ancient Babylonia. The first of these held the "Epic of Paradise, the story of the Flood and the Fall of Man," the second comprised the Sumerian liturgical texts, No. 3 is the "Epic of Gilgamish," a sort of Semitic Siegfried, and the fourth, just translated, covers the liturgies and psalms of that ancient people. While most of the 30,000 tablets which form the magnificent collection of the Pennsylvania University date from about 2,100 years before Christ, certain of them go back to 4,000 years before Christ.

Except that they were a subject people of the Babylonian kings, nothing historical is known of the Sumerians, or of their origin, or of the event which carried them to Nippur. The Babylonian was a Semitic race, the Sumerian wasn't, and the doctors do not know how to class the race. It reveals in the tablets a very high degree of culture.

Renewed interest in the tablets came last week in stories printed in the news columns concerning the story of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden. The exoneration of Eve from blame in the tablet story stirred much comment, though a translation of this feature was made public several years ago.

The Sumerian "Epic of Paradise" tells of the creation of man by a woman deity out of clay, perhaps the very clay of the tablets. The existence of Paradise with the first man to enjoy it was a lonely one, as no helpmeet was made for him. In other words there was no Eve until after the fall.

Ziugiddu, who seems to correspond to the Biblical Noah, was saved from the flood by his feminine creator, and after the recession of the waters he was given another chance in Paradise. He couldn't behave himself, ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree and was expelled from Eden. Later, when he went to work, a wife was supplied him. If this was Eve she was utterly without blemish in her character.

Might Have Lived Long.

If Noah had not transgressed the law and eaten of the cassia tree (in this legend the tree of life), he would have lived 50,000 years like his ancestors. The story of the tablet of Paradise is told much like Genesis in form and might be described as a hymn. Ninella, wife of Enki, first made a man whom she placed in Paradise, here called Dilmun, on the east coast of the Arabian Gulf, about a hundred miles from the mouth of the Tigris-Euphrates system.

A mistaken idea seems to be the prevailing one about these treasures of the Pennsylvania University by the persons who have only read of them. They think the tablets are sizable affairs. In fact, they are very small, most of them being about 3 by 4 inches, while there are a few 5 by 7. It is not the least wonder about them that so much has been crowded on these small surfaces by the antique gravers. A tablet 5 by 7 inches holds the legends of the creation, the fall, the flood and the saving of Noah and his family, who were to multiply into a new world. Other tablets, no larger, hold even more writing when the liturgical hymns and religious customs were the subject.

Certain tablets have suffered terribly at the teeth of time, and many were broken and paris lost in the process of excavation. There is accordingly a lack of continuity about many, and in the case of the liturgical code of Hammurabi, King of Babylon about 2000 B. C., part of the origial record was cut away by the conquerors of that king, who then added the acccount of their own triumph. This is a big stone nine feet or so in height, of diorite—a metamorphic rock.

Eliminating obvious legendary lore and the lies that are poetic in most histories, the tablets on view at the Pennsylvania University under Curator George Byron Gordon, Ph. D., provides a history of the human race as it existed in this valley to 1400 B. C. The later tablets were discovered forty years after the Babylonian tablets, and it is these which Prof. Langdon has added to our curious store. Whoever the Sumerians were, in religious matters they had a great influence, setting an example of form of worship, prayer and song that influenced even the Jews, and is said to be the beginning of every antique form of worship.

Interesting as these records of religious ceremony are, they are surpassed in vital interest by the accounts of everyday life as it was lived thus anciently in the Euphrates valley. There is hardly a small item of the daily life of these people that isn't pictured on these tablets. And they show all sorts of writing of the Sumerian characters, from the incomplete or badly formed to the highest art, which gives a resemblance of a jewelled decoration to the tablet on which a master worked.

At this period there was a mail service and in the collection are a number of intimate letters, some of them love letters, others dunning letters, and still others that are orders for food supplies and goods sent to merchants. The letters, although written on soft yellow stone, were placed in a stone envelope, so thin as to be almost, but not quite, transparent and attached to the missive was a postage stamp which resembled a hickorynut in size and shape. One of these letters is from a young man to his sweetheart upbraiding her for not writing to him, and adding:

"If I am no longer in control of you please send back the money I advanced to you and we will call it off."

The money that this provident lover sought to recover amounted, so it was said, to $2.

Inns at this epoch were conducted by women of a certain class and these women were frequently hauled up before magistrates on the complaint of travellers. So it seems that *Dame Quickly* existed as a type ages before Shakespeare.

Also Used in Schools.

The same little soft stone tablets were used as slates in the schools, and the collection shows a number of these where the pupils were of various grades of culture. On one half of the tablet the teacher set her copy of verses or an arithmetical problem, and on the other half the pupil did his lesson. One of these school tablets exhibits the mark of the scholar's thumb, lines on the skin, &c., where he had rubbed out his work.

There are wedding contracts galore in which the bride gives an exhaustive inventory of her jewels, dresses, silver, vessels, slaves, &c. The specification is made that if her husband repudiates her after the wedding she is to have all her goods back and he in addition is to pay her alimony. One young person who married a son of a priest of the Goddess Ishbar demanded a guarantee of her future from the father-in-law as well as her spouse to be.

The inhabitants of the town of Seppar memorialized a King of Babylon about their taxes, claiming that these were so heavy that they could not live and pay them. Various suits at law are preserved in the same way, one being a petition of a group of persons that a certain city should not be permitted to cut a highway through their property. This suit was carried to the Supreme Court and decided in favor of the town.

On one tablet is the advertisement of a purse of money which had been found by an honest man in the year 2000 B. C. Maps of various kinds and sizes showing the location of roads, wells and canals are common. These were for the convenience of trade, which was of course entirely carried on by caravan. And when a caravaneer lost the goods consigned to him by no fault of his own, although this loss may have thrown him into bankruptcy, there was a law almost precisely like the one in use to-day to declare him free of these debts. If on the other hand it was proved that he had stolen or by negligence lost his consignors' goods, then he was sold as a slave.

The Sumerian language was a real language, and in the records are tablets explanatory of vowels and consonants, tables of weights and measures, &c. There is a book dealing entirely with the verb, and another whose subject matter is the preposition. Prayer books and hymn books are almost one-half of the collection.

Many Libraries Existed.

It may surprise some people to learn that in Mesopotamia in that far off time there existed libraries like the Carnegie Libraries, that is in point of number. For every quarter of a city there appears to have been a library and there were numerous circulating libraries. Lists of books are given that were loaned and had to be returned with the payment of a small fee. If these books were kept out over a certain specified time then the borrower must pay a fine. One such list is dated 2400 B. C.

An inheritance law, probably the oldest in the history of the world, is clearly given. It shows that the child who renounces his sonship and takes his share is legally separated by his parents and has no further claim upon them. Strict laws were passed in regard to orphans and their adoption.

In his introduction to the volumes referred to, Dr. Langdon said:

"We are on safe ground in assuming that the sages who wrote our epics of the fall of man knew of the deeply rooted tradition in Babylonia. This was that man by a sin had brought on himself the greatest catastrophe, the loss of long life. I believe that the priestly scribe who told the narrative in Hebrew pursued his investigation beyond Semitic poems of Babylonia, rehearsed by the Canaanites before the Hebrew captivity."

American Films Take the Parisian Movie Fans by Storm

Disregard for Expense and Superiority of Screen Drama Give Yankees Great Advantage Over French Producers

PARIS, Jan. 10.

FRANCE has just missed being taken by the enemy in feat of arms, but by Jove she is being peacefully invaded by foreign business men in a way that would alarm any other nationality but the French. They do not seem to care, the more the merrier, so long as any human being or combination of beings have something good to offer. And in the matter of films the Americans have the centre of the stage, the Parisians themselves say so. American films occupy more than one half of every programme at every cinema palace in the French capital, and everywhere one hears nothing but praise of them.

It took the American films to educate the French into the belief that movie shows are not the vulgar and uninteresting thing they first conceived and that a first class actor or actress might act for a cinema play without falling into disgrace and becoming wholly *déclasse* (unclassed). So much for our educational system.

Americans Spend Money.

"The Americans are not afraid to spend money in order to procure perfectly acted films," that is what the French professional people say. While the French firms, they say it themselves, are so afraid to have 20 francs' worth of film spoiled they hurry the artists through their roles and are not willing to have an imperfect scene acted over again for fear of the extra expense. Also, they criticise themselves and their own. French actors and actresses overdo their parts, so they say, they make grimaces and go into all sorts of extraordinary contortions, under the impression that they must exaggerate because of the absence of speaking parts. That is their mistake and causes their downfall and their ruin.

Another thing. Up to very recently such namby-pamby plays were chosen that they were nauseating to the intelligent public, being only fit to amuse school children and their governesses. It is true that for a long time only American films showing all sorts of horse-play and low comedy acts were turned in the Paris cinemas.

But now that the good films are being produced, films that cost money, those with a purpose, and those showing some of our magnificent scenery, the fame of the American film is growing from day to day. The home production on the contrary has fallen so into disgrace, not only for its mechanical defects, but for its purpose as well, that the big film companies are beginning to realize they will have to "get a move on," or else sink down to oblivion and the disaster consequent.

Not content with sending their films broadcast all over Europe, the American movie companies have now descended upon the country *en masse*. They say they have filmed all the scenery there is to film in America, and they are at their wits' ends for new subjects as well as for new scenery. So here they are, as Paris is unquestionably the intellectual as well as the geographical centre of this world's activities, more so than ever since the war. If a man wants to see another on no matter what kind of business he has only to come to Paris and sit down at a cafe, and he will surely see his man go by sooner or later.

This is the gist of a conversation heard between two film men here the other day. They hail from California (the Universal Film Company, Universal City). "We have been in Berlin," they said, "to Budapest and to Vienna, and what do you think; the very men we were looking for were right here in Paris all the time, and we had to go to Germany and Austria to find it out.

Talk about stalking game! When it is a question of unearthing a man, men of talent and reputation, you may trust the American every time. He has a nose for news and the unerring instinct for a "good thing" that is not equalled by those of any other nationality, and he has also what Talleyrand recommended—*audace, de l'audace, et encore de l'audace!* Cheek, we call it. He will ask a pope or a king to do a stunt for his film as easily as he would ask a beggar to pose before his implacable camera.

Californians Make a Hit.

These California men have hit the bulls-eye several times already since their arrival in Paris. There are two of them, the business manager and the artistic director, and between them pretty much everything is game that comes within reach of their dragnet. While the business manager corrals a Paris film concern and sells him a few dozen films, or rushes off to Brussels where he performs ditto, the artistic director, who speaks five languages as to the manner born, has landed—Brieux, the sons of Leon Tolstoy, Anatole France, the son of Sardou, the son of Jules Verne, Flammarion, the world renowned astronomer, to say nothing of half a dozen of the most noted French actresses and actors, and now all these are working like beavers for the Universal Film Company, and it would not be astonishing if between now and next summer these managers chartered a ship and carried off the whole brains of France to Universal City, California.

Writers Are in Demand.

Nor is this all. American writers and artists of talent over here are not being overlooked, and there are a number. Mrs. John Van Vorst, in private life Mrs. Hugue Le Roux, is working on something mysterious. Mrs. Anna Bowman Dodd, who has just escaped to New York to look after the proofs of her new book, "Up the Seine to the Battle Fields" (Harper's), was seduced before leaving into considering a proposition for her book "On the Knees of the Gods," a book on heroic Greece. Whether these men finally succeeded in invading the sanctum of Mrs. Edith Wharton in Rue de Varennes they would neither affirm nor deny. A man never likes to admit that he has been beaten, even once.

Eugene Brieux, the famous perpetrator of "La Femme Seule" (Woman Alone) and other similar "outrages," is said to be surpassing himself. He has got his play, "Les Americains chez Nous" (The Americans in France), under way, and now he is filming a scenario for these two California sleuths, who simply stood guard on his door step with drawn revolvers, so to speak, until on the temptation of the dollars he too succumbed.

No, that is not quite fair to say of Brieux. He may think of the dollars, to be sure, but he dearly loves these problem plays and things for the uplifting of humanity, and he has gone mad with enthusiasm over this scenario for the American film company. It is to be something magnificent, and will entail a visit to Greece, and incidentally a company of French players is being specially engaged for this utopian dream, whatever it is. Nothing is being overlooked, and a jury is being formed with Sarah Bernhardt as chief to select the actors and actresses best suited to the various roles. These are to be used over here, and naturally will find their way to California, to Universal City, later on. A number of other companies are already in active operation for this gigantic concern in other parts of the country, notably in Italy and in Hungaria. Whew!

Daly at Work Already.

Arnold Daly, the Beau Brummel of New York I believe, is actively at work "educating" a French film company up to American ways out in the suburbs of Paris somewhere. Mr. Daly is doing "When We Love," a film by Pierre Decourselles, in ten instalments, and he expects this to go big in America. Incidentally he is perfectly crazy about Mme. Desclos-Guitry's "play," the play of course, but Cupid is standing out there near his place behind a tree, his fat sides shaking with laughter, and he has not an arrow left in his quiver. They are all in Mr. Daly's breast. "L'Heure Exquise," it is a taking title, and "When We Love" is another. Mr. Daly would like to replace the French artist in "L'Heure Exquise" in the New York production, if Mme. Guitry gets away from Madrid and as far as America with it.